

Family of assailant seeks retrial

AMMAN (R) — The family of a Palestinian, sentenced to death by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) for killing three of its leaders, appealed Tuesday for him to be retried in Tunis where the attack took place. Hamza Abu Zeid, 28, was convicted by a Palestinian military court in Yemen this month of shooting Salah Khalaf (Ahu Iyad), the right-hand man of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, Hael Abdul Hamid and a top Khalaf aide on Jan. 16. The PLO says it will execute him in Yemen after Ramadan which ends in about a week. "Hamza was questioned by the Tunisians for what happened in Tunis and they decided it was a politically-motivated crime related to internal PLO struggles and handed him over to the PLO," said Abdullah Abu Zeid, one of Hamza's brothers. "According to international law and practices, a Tunis court should try him and Tunisian laws should be applied because he committed his crime there," he told Reuters, saying he spoke on behalf of the whole family.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation

جordan Times يصدر بالإنجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية العربية الرأي

Volume 16 Number 4673

AMMAN WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 1991, RAMADAN 25, 1411

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams

Lebanon asks Egypt, Syria to push Baker

BEIRUT (R) — President Elias Hrawi asked Syria and Egypt Tuesday to press U.S. Secretary of State James Baker for an end to Israel's occupation of South Lebanon. Officials said Mr. Hrawi asked Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to urge Mr. Baker to work towards the implementation of a U.N. resolution calling on Israel to leave Lebanon. Mr. Baker, now visiting Israel, is due in Cairo and Damascus this week. The officials said Mr. Assad and Mr. Mubarak promised to discuss the issue with him. Some 1,000 Israeli troops and a 3,000-strong allied Lebanese militia hold a border "security zone" established in 1985 and running up to 15 kilometers into Lebanese territory. U.N. Security Council Resolution 425 calls for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Israeli troops from Lebanon. It was adopted following an Israeli incursion in 1978.

Banks to cancel debts of Kuwaitis

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait's commercial banks will cancel debts totalling some 1.4 billion dinars (\$4.9 billion) owed by 180,000 citizens, the governor of the central bank was quoted Tuesday as saying. It was the first official disclosure of the amount to be written off under a decree announced by the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, Sunday night. Radio Kuwait quoted Central Bank Governor Sheikh Salem Abdul Aziz Al Sabah as telling the London-based Sawt Al Kuwait newspaper that the six local commercial banks would pay full interest on deposits for the first six months of the seven-month Iraqi occupation. He did not disclose how much this would involve.

Afghanistan sacks Kishtmand

ISLAMABAD (R) — The Afghan government has sacked senior Vice-President Sultan Ali Kishtmand, the official Bakhtar news agency said Tuesday. He was replaced by a junior vice-president, Abdul Wahid Sarobi, said the agency. Bakhtar gave no reason for the dismissal, which it said had been unanimously approved Monday by a joint session of both houses of parliament.

Pulitzer prizes announced

NEW YORK (AP) — The Des Moines Register won the 1991 Pulitzer Prize for public service Tuesday for a story about a woman who had been raped. The story prompted widespread reconsideration of the traditional media practice of concealing the identity of rape victims. The spot news reporting Pulitzer went to the staff of the Miami Herald for stories about a local cult leader. Joseph T. Hallinan and Susan M. Headden of the Indianapolis Star won the Pulitzer for investigative reporting for a series on medical malpractice. The Wall Street Journal's Susan C. Fahey won the 1991 Pulitzer for explanatory journalism for a report on the leveraged buyout of Safeway Stores Inc. that revealed the human costs of high finance. Reporters Marjorie Lundstrom and Rocelle Sharpe of Gannett News Service won the Pulitzer prize for national reporting for a story that disclosed that hundreds of child abuse-related deaths are undetected each year as a result of errors by medical examiners. The beat reporting Pulitzer was awarded to Natalie Angier of the New York Times for her reports on a variety of scientific topics. The Washington Post's Carlyle Murphy and the New York Times' Serge Schmemann won the Pulitzer for international reporting. Murphy won for her stories filed from Kuwait and Schmemann won for his coverage of the reunification of Germany. The Pulitzer for feature writing went to Sheryl James of the St. Petersburg (Florida) Times for stories about a mother who abandoned her newborn child. Jim Hoagland of the Washington Post won the Pulitzer for columns on events leading up to the Gulf war and the political problems of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

Combined agency dispatches

THE SECURITY Council appeared likely Tuesday to delay the formal declaration of a Gulf war ceasefire because it had not yet received the text of a decree by Iraq's National Assembly accepting the council's terms.

British and United States diplomats said council members approved the wording of a letter to Iraq saying its foreign minister had given irrevocable and unqualified acceptance of a tough council resolution setting ceasefire terms, and that a ceasefire "is therefore now effective."

But the council was still awaiting a copy of the National Assembly document, also referred to in the letter to be sent to Iraqi U.N.

Ambassador Abdul Amir Al Anbari.

Council members disclosed the hitch as they arrived for closed-door consultations to give final approval for the letter.

The hitch appeared to be only technical, but was sufficient to delay for perhaps 24 hours the despatch of the letter declaring the existence of a ceasefire.

These include scrapping Baghdad's weapons of mass destruction and earmarking part of its oil revenues for war reparations.

While the Iraqi note, signed by Foreign Minister Ahmad Hussein, was filled with objections to various provisions of the draft, its penultimate paragraph said Baghdad "has no choice but to accept this resolution."

The response from council President Paul Noterdaeme of Belgium, addressed to Mr. Al Anbari, says this paragraph "contains

about 100,000 U.S. troops occupying part of southern Iraq.

The letter approved by council members' acknowledged receipt of Iraq's acceptance last Saturday of U.N. Resolution 687, setting terms for a ceasefire.

The response from council President Paul Noterdaeme of Belgium, addressed to Mr. Al Anbari, says this paragraph "contains

official notification of the acceptance, irrevocable and without qualifying conditions, by Iraq of Resolution 687 (1991), in accordance with paragraph 33 of that resolution."

Mr. Noterdaeme pins the Iraqi down further, adding: "This was informed to me during my meeting with you (Mr. Al Anbari) on April 8," while also noting that Iraq's National Assembly accepted the resolution on April 6.

"The members of the Security Council have, lastly, asked me to note that the conditions established in paragraph 33 of Resolution 687 (1991) have now been met and that the formal ceasefire referred to in paragraph 33 of that resolution is therefore now effective," the letter concluded.

Paragraph 33 of Resolution 687, adopted on April 3, "declares that, upon official notification by Iraq to the secretary general and to the Security Council of its acceptance of the provisions above, a formal ceasefire is effective between Iraq and Kuwait and the member states cooperating with Kuwait in accordance with Resolution 687 (1991)."

The council was to hold an open meeting to approve the mandate of a U.N. observer team to patrol a demilitarized zone extending 10 kilometers into Iraq and five kilometers into Kuwait, as also stipulated in the ceasefire resolution.

The 1,440-man unit, called the U.N. Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM), will com-

prise 300 observers and five infantry companies to ensure security, as well as a field engineering unit to help clear mines, a logistics unit and an air wing equipped with planes and helicopters.

The White House said Tuesday that U.S. surveillance flights would continue over Iraq, even after American forces have been withdrawn, to make sure the U.N.-imposed ceasefire is being respected.

Residential spokesman Martin Fitzwater did not say how long the flights would continue.

Mr. Fitzwater also said the administration was studying a European proposal for a U.N.-protected refugee zone in northern Iraq to accommodate the thousands of Kurdish.

"We are discussing it. We think

it has some merit," Mr. Fitzwater said.

The United States has been airdropping food, blankets and other supplies to Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq since Sunday.

Mr. Fitzwater said withdrawal of U.S. forces from the Gulf would be sharply accelerated next Friday once the U.N. observer force is in place.

There are now 350,000 U.S.

forces in the Gulf region, down from 540,000 when President George Bush called a halt to the war on Feb. 27.

Mr. Fitzwater said the U.N. observer force would total some 1,400 members, including both armed and unarmed contingents. "The question of U.S. participation is still undetermined," he said.

Iraq rejects border enclave call, warns Turkey and Iran

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQI PRIME Minister Saadoun Hammadi said Tuesday his country would fight calls for a Kurdish refuge in his country, but a Kurdish rebel leader welcomed the plan.

The United States, Britain and France flew supply missions for the hordes of refugees backed up along the Turkish and Iranian borders. About one million had reportedly already crossed.

Dr. Hammadi said Iraq rejected the British plan for a U.N.-

protected enclave inside his country "and will oppose it by all means."

In remarks carried by the Iraqi News Agency (INA), Dr. Hammadi accused Western nations of "fabricating this (refugee) problem and exaggerating it."

He said his country had already taken steps to solve the problem, including an amnesty for Kurdish rebels and offering transportation for refugees who want to return home.

"Iraq's statement says everything about its contempt for bu-

(Continued on page 4)

Ozal, Peres discuss 'peace water pipeline'

AMSTERDAM (AP) — Turkish Turgut Ozal said Tuesday he talked with Israeli Labour leader Shimon Peres on possible Israeli participation in an ambitious "peace water pipeline" project for the Middle East."

Mr. Ozal told reporters he met Mr. Peres Monday evening at an undisclosed location after the start of the three-day global panel conference on world political and economic issues.

He confirmed earlier reports that the two men had discussed including Israel in his recently revised proposals for the construction of a regional fresh water supply network, but refused to give details.

The Turkish president has recently revived his 1987 proposal to pump water from his nation's reservoirs to the arid Gulf states, Jordan and Syria as an economic vehicle for promoting political stability in the region.

Turkey is the only nation in the Middle East with a surplus of water.

Mr. Ozal reintroduced the plan after huge oil slicks threatened desalination plants on the Arabian Peninsula during the Gulf war and showed the vulnerability of the region's fresh water supply.

Mr. Ozal's proposed network would carry six billion litres daily from the desert region on a total of about 6,500 kilometres of pipe-

line.

Mr. Nasrash said the hardliners wanted a committee to be set up to prepare for a special meeting of the Palestine National Council (PNC), the Palestinian parliament-in-exile, and to elect a new collective leadership.

Arafat's support for Iraq in Gulf war and its occupation of Kuwait has damaged the PLO's standing, particularly among Arab states which have been its chief financial backer.

Palestinian groups based in Damascus were less sympathetic towards Baghdad.

Mr. Nasrash said Palestinians should now work to "preserve the unity of the PLO as a solid and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people."

The initiative was not accompanied by previous demands they have made for the removal of Mr. Arafat and a renewed armed struggle against Israel.

The PNSF is headed by Khaled Al Fahoum, a former PNC speaker, and Abdul Mohsen Abu Mazi, former member of the

(Continued on page 3)

Georgia declares its independence; Gorbachev tackles economic crisis

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Georgia became the fourth Soviet republic to declare independence Tuesday, the second anniversary of the slaying of 19 demonstrators by Soviet troops wielding sharpened shovels in the capital of Tbilisi.

President Mikhail Gorbachev meanwhile proposed a series of emergency measures to halt the country's economic upheaval, including a moratorium on strikes and demonstrations.

The declaration by the Georgian legislature, while largely symbolic, puts the fertile southern republic of 5.3 million people on a formal path to secession, along with the Baltic republics of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.

Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, in an address urging the legislature to pass the declaration, accused the Soviet government of massing 1,500 troops in South Ossetia, a corner of the republic beset by ethnic bloodshed.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia also noted that 99 per cent of Georgian voters had endorsed independence in a referendum on March

31. The official Soviet news agency TASS and the independent Georgian news service Iberia said the legislature, meeting in special session, unanimously adopted the declaration "proclaiming state independence for Georgia."

The immediate effect of the declaration was largely symbolic because it was unlikely to be recognised as legal by President Gorbachev and the national legislature.

However, the declaration could lead to more concrete steps, such as creation of a separate currency and economic system. Mr. Gamsakhurdia already has begun building a Georgian army, and he has called for a faster transition to a free market than advocated by the central government.

Lithuania was the first Soviet republic to declare independence, on March 11, 1990. Gorbachev imposed a crushing seven-week economic embargo on the Baltic republic following that declaration which he decried un-

(Continued on page 3)

Masri to present Jordan's views to Baker in Geneva

AMMAN (J.T.) — Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri has described his planned meeting in Geneva this week with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker as important and said the Middle East region was expected to witness new developments related to the Palestine problem and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Geneva meeting on Friday will be dedicated to consultations and to discussing general topics related to American ideas and Jordan's role in the peace-making process, the minister told Jordan Television and the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Stressing Jordan's importance in the peace process in virtue of it being the Arab country with the longest confrontation line with Israel and the closest to the Palestinian people, the minister said that he would present Jordan's views and will make it clear that the Kingdom will adhere to its chief financial backer.

Palestinian groups based in Damascus were less sympathetic towards Baghdad.

Mr. Nasrash said Palestinians should now work to "preserve the unity of the PLO as a solid and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people."

The initiative was not accompanied by previous demands they have made for the removal of Mr. Arafat and a renewed armed struggle against Israel.

The PNSF is headed by Khaled Al Fahoum, a former PNC speaker, and Abdul Mohsen Abu Mazi, former member of the

U.S., Israel agree in principle over regional peace conference

TEL AVIV (R) — The United States and Israel agreed in principle on Tuesday to work for a regional Middle East peace conference but a host of practical problems remained to be worked out, a senior U.S. official said.

Briefing reporters after Secretary of State James Baker met Israeli leaders and a group of Palestinian nationalists, the official said:

"The idea of having a meeting has been agreed. The details, format, location, timing, participants — none of these were worked out."

After meeting Mr. Baker for 90 minutes, Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy suggested there was broad agreement on the underlying aims of such a conference which would be chaired by the United States and attended by

the Soviet Union, Israel and Arab states.

He did not say who would represent the Palestinians.

Mr. Baker, who later met separately Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Defence Minister Moshe Arens and six Palestinian leaders, cautioned against undue optimism.

"I agree we have had a productive and very constructive meeting this morning and I don't wish to diminish that in any way by saying that there is a long, long way to go," he said.

"There are many, many parties involved. There are a lot of questions before us that have to be addressed and that have not been resolved, so I hope that there is no rush to judgement here."

Mr. Shamir's spokesman Avi Pazner said Mr. Baker would

(Continued on page 4)

Egypt, Palestinians in Cairo reject regional parley idea

Combined agency dispatches

PALESTINIANS IN Cairo said on Tuesday a regional Middle East conference agreed upon by Israel and the United States would not achieve peace.

Egypt also rejected Israel's proposals for separate negotiations with Arab governments for solving the Middle East conflict, the leading state-owned newspaper Al Ahram reported in its Wednesday early edition.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, currently visiting Israel and due in Cairo Wednesday, agreed in principle with Israeli officials to hold regional talks, but practical details were yet to be worked out, a senior U.S.

official said.

"In principle, we reject a regional conference in substance and form," said a senior Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official in Cairo who asked not to be named.

"If Israel and the United States have indeed agreed on a regional conference, then the United States is no longer able to find peace in the region," another PLO official said. "Israel and the United States are strong allies, so there will be no opponents and no judges in this case."

He said an international conference, approved by Egypt and Arab states, would guarantee that all parties in the conflict would be involved. Palestinians would have the right to self-determination and Israel would be forced to get out of Lebanon and return the Golan Heights to

Syria.

"(International conference) won't solve only one problem, but all Middle East problems," the PLO official told Reuters.

"If Israel and the United States have indeed agreed on a regional conference, then the United States is no longer able to find peace in the region," another PLO official said. "Israel and the United States are strong allies, so there will be no opponents and no judges in this case."

Elections likely in 16 months — Kuwaiti minister

KUWAIT (Agencies) — A Kuwaiti cabinet minister has said that promised parliamentary elections would probably be held in 16 months time, far later than the opposition demands.

Cabinet Affairs Minister Abdul Rahman Al Awadi said the elections promised by Kuwait's emir Sunday were likely to be held in August or September next year.

Opposition groups have cautiously welcomed the emir's election pledge by say it does not fully match their demands for democracy.

Mr. Awadi explained that 400,000 Kuwaitis were still abroad after the Gulf war and were not expected to return until the end of this year.

Voter registration traditionally took place in February and a two-month period was then allowed for objections to be lodged.

"I don't think (the election) will be more than two or three months after that," Mr. Awadi told a news conference. Asked if this would mean elections in August 1992, he said: "August or September, yes."

Mr. Awadi's statement seemed certain to disappoint opposition democracy campaigners, some of whom want elections within six months. One said he was "uncomfortable" about the prospect of a long delay.

Opposition groups are campaigning for restoration of parliament, which was dissolved in 1986 by the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, citing security concerns.

Kuwaitis have become more vocal in their calls for political reform since a U.S.-led coalition ended the seven-month Iraqi occupation in February.

Mr. Awadi said official political parties would not contest the election because there was no current law permitting parties.

But a new parliament would be able to pass a law creating political parties, he said, and press freedom would be total.

On the emir's suggestion to give a political role to women, Mr. Awadi said he hoped women would be able to vote in next

year's elections.

He said the electorate might double from its previous 75,000, or out of the total Kuwaiti population of just over 600,000.

The emir's promise, in his first speech since returning from Gulf war exile in Saudi Arabia, was a concession to Western and opposition pressure for change, political analysts said.

"His Highness sort of met us half way by pinpointing the issues which we will try to solve by discussion," said Isa Al Shaehe, spokesman of the conservative Muslim Brotherhood, one of four main opposition groups.

Mr. Awadi said he hoped Prime Minister and Crown Prince Sheikh Saad Al Abdulla Al Sabah would name a new cabinet soon after the fasting month of Ramadan ends next week. The previous cabinet resigned three weeks ago.

He said the government was action to stop attacks on Palestinians, some of whom are accused by Kuwaitis of collaborating with the Iraqis. Some security force members had been court-martialed for injustices, he said.

The emir also made clear on Sunday that he was still concerned about the threat from Iraq and asked Western and Arab states to keep their forces in Kuwait.

"They won't feel safe unless there are Western troops here," one Western diplomat said. But the United States and other Western countries were unlikely to agree to station ground forces permanently in the emirate, he added.

U.S. President George Bush, whose troops led the war against Iraq, has said they will withdraw as soon as a United Nations peacekeeping force has moved to police the border under the ceasefire accord — possibly by the end of this month.

The speaker of Kuwait's dissolved parliament, Ahmad Saadoun, returned home Monday and added his voice to opposition calls for immediate general elections.

"These should be a parliament right now," Mr. Saadoun said.

Mr. Saadoun, speaker of the parliament dissolved by the emir, formed a pro-democracy group of 32 former deputies which staged stormy rallies in December 1989 and January 1990 to pressure the government into restoring parliament.

"We expected better and decisive steps by the emir," he added.

He refused to say if he was granted permission to return home. Activists said he was among many pro民主 politicians barred from returning immediately after the U.S.-led allied force recaptured the emirate in late February.

U.S. Ambassador Edward Gneib said Monday that the emir had placed the country firmly on the road towards democracy by promising elections next year and indicating that women will be given the vote.

Mr. Gneib also said the emir made clear to his people that U.S. and allied forces "may be here for a longer period of time than some expected" because of Kuwaiti fears.

On complaints that the emir had set no firm date for elections and said he might be stalled for time in hopes of weakening the pro-democracy campaign, the ambassador said: "I don't see that at all. Maybe this is a tactic the opposition hopes to use to keep the government on track, but I don't think it's necessary. The government could hardly be more explicit than they were last night."

"Clearly the emir endorsed bringing women into the political process... voting and being members of parliament," Mr. Gneib said. "You have to understand the society. The emir goes on television and says he wants to very seriously consider the role of women in the political process. That's an endorsement."

Mr. Gneib said the emir had sought to emphasise that there continued to be security problems, and that those had to be addressed.

"It is a public statement by the government that coalition forces may be here for a longer period of time than some expected."

"These should be a parliament right now," Mr. Saadoun said.

Just weeks after war, sales pitch for arms changes tone

By Nicholas Doughty
Reuter

BRUSSELS — The dust has barely settled after Operation Desert Storm, but already some defence companies are using the performance of their weapons to heat the competition in a cut-throat market.

The latest advertisement by the makers of the fearsome multiple launch rocket system — which rained cascades of high-explosives on Iraqi positions — shows a picture of parched and cracked terrain.

Superimposed under the title "Report from the Desert" are simple tributes to the system's efficiency during the Gulf war from newspaper articles and British artillery commanders. The advertisement is featured in Jane's Defence Weekly.

Bob Turvey, executive vice-president of the London-based company that markets the rocket system, makes no apologies for using war as a selling point while politicians are talking about the need to control arms sales.

"If you're trying to sell a piece of equipment, it's stupid to hide the facts, not to talk about it because it kills people," he said in a telephone interview.

Such an approach is rare in the world of defence advertising, where lethal weapons are just another product, death a

taboo word and polite euphemisms essential.

"This is an area that's had a great deal of bad press and everyone is very sensitive about the language used," said Susan Parker, who manages advertising sales for Jane's.

But Mr. Turvey is scathing about companies which shy away from using the Gulf conflict to promote their arms on the grounds that such advertising might offend moral sensitivities.

"I suppose people who won't use war to sell arms are all pacifists," he said. "Funny business, the defence trade."

The end of the cold war and eagerness to cash in the "peace dividend" had proved a major setback for the world of arms promotion and sales.

Industry executives say there is unlikely to be any major upturn in arms production or advertising as a result of the Gulf war. One, who asked to remain anonymous, said the six-week conflict "wasn't long enough or bloody enough to generate the need for more ammunition or equipment."

But the war saw many weapons, like the U.S. Patriot air defence missile, tested in combat for the first time. Many advertising industry executives expect a harder sell for high-technology arms, helicopters and other "success stories."

Flick through the latest

copies of any defence magazine and you can already see the signs.

A Swedish company has begun advertising its disposable suits for protection against chemical weapons.

A company spokesman said the decision to advertise had been partly prompted by Gulf war fears that Iraq might use such weapons and heightened awareness of the need for protection.

The U.S. makers of the Abrams M1A2 main battle tank, bidding to supply Britain with its next generation of heavy armour, have chosen a picture of their tank cruising through the desert.

Recent history and political instability in regions throughout the world attest to the need for the continued evolution... of the world's main battle tank," runs the next accompanying advertisement.

From the U.S. aircraft engine makers Pratt and Whitney, this simple full-page message, signed with the company's logo: "To the men and women of Desert Storm: Mission accomplished. Bravo."

The latest advertisement from South Africa's Armscor for its 155-mm self-propelled Howitzer has pictures of a desert waste and a macho warning: "If your operational area could turn out to be sand, make sure you don't get it kicked in your face."

The country will remain under the effect of the cold front which affected the Kingdom in the past two days. Therefore, it will be cold, partly cloudy and rainy at times in the northern and central parts of the Kingdom. In the southern and eastern parts, it will be dusty and partly cloudy. Winds will be westerly, fresh, and in Asir, winds will be northerly, fresh and sea wavy.

Min./max. temp.

Amman 8 / 15

Jordan Valley 12 / 22

36 Greeks killed in Turkey bus fire

ISTANBUL (AP) — A double-decker bus carrying Greek tourists on Easter vacation caught fire here on Tuesday, killing at least 36 people trapped inside, police said. A travel agent and witness said a Turkish bad set fire to the bus.

The vehicle burst into flames as it was parked in front of a hotel and was about to leave on a sightseeing trip around Istanbul.

At least five of the 36 dead were children, a police official told the Associated Press, speaking on the usual condition of anonymity.

Ane Gotsis, the manager of Agelos Tours, which organised the trip, told the AP in Athens. "A Turkish man got on the bus, poured gasoline on the seats and set it on fire." She said he had been hospitalised with burns.

"I don't know why this happened," she said, adding that she had received her information from colleagues in Istanbul.

If the claim is true, the incident could inflame tensions between traditional rivals Turkey and Greece. They are already bitterly split over such issues as the divided island of Cyprus.

Police detained two suspects for questioning in connection with the fire, the semi-official Anatolia news agency reported. It gave no details.

One of the Greek tourists, Tassos Jordanides, told the AP, "I saw some liquid dripping down the stairs (of the upper deck of the bus). I got up and looked up the stairs and saw this man pouring something from a bottle. And then, he struck a match. Suddenly the whole place was engulfed in flames and think smoke."

He said he was called for the doors to be opened, and they were. "I saw a man of about 50 or 60 with his hair in flames jumping up... I grabbed my wife and jumped out." He added he did not know if the man pouring the liquid was Turkish.

His account varied with reports from officials that the bus doors had been closed, and that the bus driver had been unable to open them.

The red-and-white bus was gutted by the blaze. Its windows were charred and broken, and some of the seats were burned to ghostly black metal skeletons.

The television initially reported the bus was overturned, but it actually had stayed upright. On the side of the Greek bus was written Agelos Tours of Athens.

Most of the victims died of smoke inhalation, according to Abdurrahman Kilic, the chief of the fire brigade in Istanbul.

The bus carried 60 Greek passengers, Gotsis said. It caught fire at around 9:30 a.m. (0630 GMT) in the Laleli district, a residential area with many hotels.

Jordanides said he tried to break the bus windows with concrete blocks, but it was too late to save the occupants.

A receptionist at the Hamidiye hotel, where the tourists had been staying, said they were part of a group of 120 Greek visitors that arrived on Saturday. They were about to set out on two buses Tuesday morning to tour Istanbul, he said, declining to be identified.

He added that the tourists were carrying small burners they had used on their bus journey from Greece.

"I saw charred bodies hanging out of the bus. Nothing was left of the bus," said an employee of another nearby hotel, declining to give his name.

The 5,000-strong regiment began pulling out from positions near the Euphrates River in southern Iraq Sunday.

The New York Times reported Tuesday that the withdrawal of about 100,000 U.S. troops from

EC summit wants Iraqi president toppled

LUXEMBOURG (R) — The leaders of the 12 European Community (EC) states, in the clearest statement yet of their desire to see Iraqi President Saddam Hussein go, say Iraq will be an international pariah as long as he is president.

The heads of government, setting out on a collision course with Baghdad, also agreed in their summit Monday to push for an enclave in northern Iraq where the millions of Kurds would be safe under United Nations control.

The European Council (summit) cannot conceive how Iraq can rejoin the community of civilised nations for as long as Saddam Hussein remains in power," said Luxembourg Prime Minister Jacques Santer, whose country holds the EC's rotating presidency.

The plights of the millions of Kurdish refugees, brought home to European public opinion by vivid television coverage, robbed France of a chance to ram through ambitious proposals for giving the EC a common foreign and security policy — its original aim when it called the summit last month.

But Paris used its setback to demonstrate how the EC could handle military issues in the future, calling an unscheduled ministerial meeting of the Western European Union (WEU) defence council as a surprise side-show to the summit.

The WEU, whose roster of members is identical to the EC's minus Denmark, Greece and Ireland, is the body most EC states would like to see as a surprise side-show to the summit.

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MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Schwarzkopf offer report denied

DALLAS (R) — The White House Monday denied a report that President George Bush had offered General Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of Operation Desert Storm, the post of U.S. army chief of staff. White House spokesman Martin Feltzwater, traveling with Mr. Bush in Texas, denied a Newsweek magazine report that Mr. Bush had offered Gen. Schwarzkopf the job but that the general had turned it down. The magazine, quoting friends, said the general was known as "stormin' Norman" plan instead to retire this summer and write his memoirs. A book deal could bring the war hero, who was head of allied forces in the Gulf war, an advance of as much as \$4 million, according to Newsweek. As a lecturer, he could command an estimated \$60,000 per speech. The current army chief of staff, General Carl Vuono, is due to step down from the post in June.

Swiss offer to host Afghan talks

BERNE (R) — Switzerland has offered to host informal talks between the two sides in the fighting in Afghanistan, Foreign Minister Rene Felber told a news conference Monday. Mr. Felber said he hoped that representatives of the Afghan government and Mojahedeen rebel forces could find a peaceful solution to 12 years of war if they met. He did not say if the two sides had accepted the offer. Mr. Felber was speaking after a five-day visit to Iran and Turkey, where he met Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and Turkish President Turgut Ozal. The Iranian government reacted positively to the Swiss proposal. Mr. Felber added. Both Switzerland and Iran agreed on the necessity for a diplomatic solution to the Afghan conflict.

Saudis sending relief to Iraqi refugees

NICOSIA (R) — King Fahd has ordered Saudi Arabian officials to send relief supplies through international channels to help ease the plight of Iraqi refugees, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported. He issued the order at the weekly cabinet meeting Monday. SPA said the agency did not describe the nature of the aid. Up to two million Kurds and Shi'ite Muslims from northern and southern Iraq have been overwhelmed areas along the borders with Iran and Turkey.

Six die in Sudan helicopter crash

Committee formed to make arrangements for pilgrims

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ibrahim Kilani has formed a new committee to conduct an assessment of the performance of a national company which last year undertook the task of transporting pilgrims to and from Mecca and Medina and ensuring their accommodation there.

Ministry Secretary General Ahmad Hilayel met with the committee members Tuesday to discuss its agenda and said that the committee would be charged with contacting the concerned authorities in Saudi Arabia to make arrangements for the pilgrimage towards the end of June this year.

Dr. Hilayel said that there would be new arrangements with the contractors who can take charge of the transportation and lodgings.

"The Arab and Islamic nations are going through very difficult stages in the wake of the Gulf war. The Arab ranks are in disarray and Arab people are suffering from deteriorating economic conditions," Dr. Hilayel said.

"The coming haj (holy pilgrimage to Mecca) should prompt every Arab and Muslim to contribute towards helping the Arabs

and Muslims overcome the present difficult situation," he added.

Dr. Hilayel voiced satisfaction with the close cooperation between the ministries of awqaf in Jordan and Saudi Arabia and underlined the need for all Arab and Islamic countries to open a new chapter in brotherly relations based on mutual respect to safeguard the higher national interests.

Last year, Jordanian company entrusted with the task of transporting pilgrims was reported in dispute with the Ministry of Awqaf over its performance, with the latter accusing the company of failing to honour the commitment and to provide airconditioned buses to transport the pilgrims.

Earlier, officials at the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs said that the Jordanian government had given the pilgrims clearance to perform the haj this year.

The haj is one of the five basic duties of Islam and should be performed by every Muslim at least once in his lifetime, if he has the means.

In the past years, Jordan was allowed to send up to 15,000

pilgrims to haj, but as the registration has not begun for the pilgrimage this year, there is no information as to the number of Muslims wishing to perform the pilgrimage this year.

Syrian and Turkish pilgrims normally travel to Mecca by land via Jordan and the minister of awqaf Tuesday chaired a meeting at his office to review preparations and facilities normally offered to these pilgrims at the pilgrims cities in Ramtha, Maan and other areas where they stay on their way to the holy places.

According to a statement by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the minister and a special committee supervising the passage of Turks through Jordan reviewed the various articles of an agreement between the religious affairs authorities in Jordan and Turkey and were also briefed on the types of services offered to the Turkish pilgrims, like postal services, civil defence, and water supplies.

Each of the Turkish pilgrims, according to Petra, has to produce a vaccination certificate against meningitis, issued not more than 10 days before entering Jordanian territory.

Youth to present gifts to Iraqis

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian Youth Federation is sending a team on a visit to Iraq during the coming Eid Al Fitr holiday to present gifts to the Iraqis wounded in the bombing raids on Iraqi cities, according to an announcement by the federation President Seif Al Din Murad.

He told a press conference that the team would group representatives of 25 Jordanian youth clubs who raised donations and gifts to Iraqi war victims.

"The federation has decided to raise funds for the reconstruction of the milk factory in Baghdad, which was raided and destroyed by the allied forces during the Gulf war, or any other food processing plant which the Iraqi government plans to set up in the course of the reconstruction process of the country," said Mr. Murad who just returned from a visit to Baghdad along with youth and student groups from Jordan and other Arab countries.

Mr. Murad, who is also a Member of Parliament, said the groups met with Iraqi officials and groups representing Iraq youth organisations to discuss the consequences of the war and the Iraqi people's needs of assistance.

At the press conference, a general development statement was read out revealing that the youth of the Arab World have set up a special fund for supporting the steadfastness of the Iraqi people.

The fund, to be based in Amman with branches in various Arab states, will be operating under the supervision of various youth organisations which support Iraq.

Horse jumping competition

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Organising Committee of the Arabian Horse Club will hold show jumping competitions on Thursday at the Arabian Horse Club's closed arena.

Events of Thursday's competitions will include many daring and interesting showjumpings and games. Gymkana for children. Elementary class jumping at height of 60 centimetres maximum. Novice class jumping at height of 90 centimetres maximum. National Jordanian class at height of 1.10 metres maximum. Two fence challenge competition. This will be the highlight of all competitions. Two fences will keep getting higher every time riders jump them clear.

Thursday's events will be held under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Haya Bint Al-Hussein.

Trust unveils plan to safeguard Petra's natural, cultural treasures

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Petra National Trust, an organisation dedicated to preserving the rich heritage, natural beauty and quality of life of the people of the Petra region in south Jordan, held its first public meeting in Amman Tuesday to review a proposed Petra Region Development Plan drawn up by architecture students and staff from the University of Jordan.

Petra National Trust President Prince Raad Ben Zeid pledged that the trust would "exert the same effort today to preserve the human and natural heritage of Petra as the Nabateans exerted in creating it 2,000 years ago."

The long-term development plan unveiled Tuesday was drawn up by University of Jordan fourth year architecture students and their professors who have worked on it for the past nine months. The plan was requested and funded by the Petra National Trust.

Prince Raad thanked the university students and staff for their hard work, noting that "this development plan is noteworthy for its realistic quality work, and because it was drawn up by Jordanians who know the region and its people and who are sensitive to the particular cultural environment and human and economic needs of the country."

The Petra National Trust (PNT) was established 18 months ago by a group of concerned

Jordanians in order to bring together people in Jordan and abroad who share a deep appreciation of the natural beauty and cultural wealth of the Petra region — and who are committed to a collective international effort to safeguard its unique physical and human heritage.

The PNT has worked quietly since its inception in 1989. This autumn it plans to launch an international fund-raising campaign to endow it with a trust fund to finance long-term efforts, including excavations, conservation, preservation, publications, tourism development and promotion, museum displays and exhibitions, information dissemination, and cultural and human development activities.

Prince Raad noted that "just as Petra was the result of sustained and constructive interaction among the great civilisations of the ancient world, an international effort is required today to protect and preserve Petra, and to assure its physical safety for the enjoyment, scholarship and pride of future generations."

He noted the need for urgent action because the delicate environmental balance in the Petra region is extremely vulnerable to pressures from the brisk increase in tourism and the natural expansion of Wadi Musa village and

other nearby settlements, such as Beidha.

Within a few years, Petra expects to receive over 200,000 tourists a year, with over 2,000 people entering the ancient city every day during the spring and autumn high seasons.

The PNT will not implement projects itself, but will act as a coordination, research, promotion and funding body. Membership in the Petra National Trust is open to individuals and institutions from any country. The annual membership fee for individuals is JD 20 in Jordan, or \$25 abroad.

The trust's officers include Suha Shoman and Dr. Raad Abe Jaber (vice presidents), Karen Asfour (secretary) and Rami Khouri (treasurer).

The rest of the members of the founding board are Her Highness Princess Majda Raad Ben Zeid Widad Kawar, Ali Jaber, Fawzia Zayadine, Nisrin Atalla (ex-officio, Tourism Ministry) and Ghazi Bishay (ex-officio, Department of Antiquities).

The Petra National Trust is an independent, non-profit-making charitable society, which accepts tax-deductible donations according to Jordanian law.

Minister urges private sector to support tourism

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Tourism's 1991 budget is barely JD 500,000, which is mostly spent on salaries and pressing services for resthouses and advertising booklets, and the private sector is called on to contribute towards boosting the tourism industry in the country, according to Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Daoud Khalaf.

Speaking in an interview on Jordan Television, the minister said that the private sector was being helped by the ministry to carry out projects and he would want the private sector to set up tourist villages and other facilities to encourage tourism.

"What is also needed is joint efforts to help protect archaeological sites and prevent robberies of antiquities, as happened in the

past few years," the minister said.

Indeed, he said, it should be a national effort for everyone to try to boost the tourism industry which earns the country 18 per cent of its foreign currency.

Mr. Khalaf said that the government built resthouses, offered exemptions and facilities as well as land for the private sector companies to invest in tourism projects, and it wanted the private companies to provide the capital for such important and lucrative investments.

Interviewed on the same television programme, George Bawab, a tourist agent, echoed the minister's views about the importance of boosting the tourism industry and said that each foreign tourist spent \$100 in Jordan. "This is, of course, in addition to the air fare

paid to Royal Jordanian (RJ) which is also a great contributor to the tourism industry," Mr. Bawab said.

Another agent, Sumi Sawalha, said that the private and public sectors had been cooperating in this field by inviting tour operators, writers and journalists for visits to Jordan and both had been attending conferences, exhibitions in London and Berlin to encourage tourists to come to Jordan.

He said that displaying traditional handicrafts and holding exhibitions, which the government is encouraging in Amman and in foreign countries, were a great help too. He said that work was under way for holding a tourism exhibition in Tunis in two months' time to display artifacts

and other items that can encourage tourists to come to the country.

Ministry of Tourism Secretary General Nasri Atallah said last month that his office was launching a large scale campaign in Jordan and abroad in a bid to revive the tourism industry in the Kingdom, now that the Gulf war has ended, and that airlines were operating normally again.

Mr. Atallah said that immediate plans were being worked out entailing programmes to attract tourist groups from Europe, especially from Germany, Spain and Scandinavian countries.

Mr. Atallah estimated Jordan's losses in tourism during the crisis, at \$250,000 million, but he said plans under way were bound to help revive the industry.

Georgia

(Continued from page 1)

Georgian

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.

Established 1975

الطبعة الأولى لـ ١٣٧٥ ميلادي

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays. Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

Beyond talk

IN HIS book "The Jewish Paradox," Nahum Godmann, quoted the late Israeli prime minister David Ben Gurion as telling him (in 1956): "I don't understand your optimism. Why should the Arabs make peace? If I was an Arab leader I would never make terms with Israel. That is natural: We have taken their country." In the 35 years since that conversation, much change has taken place in the political landscape of the Middle East, the most prominent of which is probably the metamorphosis in Arab thinking on the question of Israel's existence and acceptance in this region. Today it is not so much an issue of the Arabs not recognising Israel and not wanting to make peace with it as it is indeed the other way round. It is now a question of whether the Israelis themselves are willing and ready to make peace with the Arabs.

For clarity's sake, we will try not to obfuscate the real issues here, not to confuse Israel's desire to establish normal ties with the Arab countries with its concurrent intransigence on Palestinian rights. The Jewish state, in other words, wants to have its cake and eat it too. Israelis want to gain everything in return for giving up nothing. Which brings us back to Ben Gurion's historic admission that Israel took Palestine away from the Palestinians and his successors' insistence on not accommodating the dispossessed and stateless people in their own country and homeland.

This is in fact the biggest problem that lies at the heart of each and every peace proposal that aims at solving the so-called Middle East conflict. Whether it is the international peace conference, or the two-track approach or the regional meeting to which Israel and the U.S. yesterday agreed, the problem is Palestine — the land and its people — first and foremost. Whatever ideas are touted, proposals advanced, steps taken, the issue that has to be settled is in the final analysis the kind of accommodation that will take place between Israelis and Palestinians on that piece of land. All Arab countries, and the rest of the world, save for Israel, agree that only the Palestinians can decide their future, otherwise known as Palestinian self-determination, and only they can sign away half of their territory to the Israelis and live with them in peace ever after. The rest of the Arabs cannot and will not do this for or on behalf of the Palestinians. The Arab World will help, support and bless any accord between the two peoples, but it will not be a substitute for the people of Palestine, under any form or banner.

The Israelis are stupid not to realise this, even though they know it and do everything possible to avoid it. In the immediate future at least, it is incumbent on their friends and financiers in Washington to instill that sense of realism in Israeli minds, something which is desperately needed for any progress and eventual solution. Short of such depth, all this talk about confidence and tracks and meetings will remain just that: talk.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

UNITED Nations Security Council Resolution 687 is the latest U.S.-Zionist ploy to impose humiliation on the Arab Nation rather than the Iraqi leadership and people: and it won't be long before the colonial powers would turn their attention to another Arab country, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Tuesday. We will be deceived as a nation if we consider this unjust resolution as directed against Iraq and its president, and we will be naive should we regard its terms as designed to impose domination and subjugation over the Iraqi people alone, the paper noted. It said that the resolutions of the Security Council have all been worked out in a manner to deprive the Arabs of any power and they offer the Zionists a service that would enable them to consolidate their hold on Arab land in Palestine and other areas of the Arab World. The latest resolution, which was sponsored by the United States, is yet one more rope being tightened around our necks strangling us all and keeping Israel as strong as ever and acting as a forward military bastion for the West, the paper continued. The paper bitterly criticised the Soviet Union and China whose leaders have been bragging about their support for the struggles of people around the world against colonial powers while allowing these powers to exterminate the Arab people of Iraq. Indeed, the paper added, the latest Security Council resolution paves the way for further atrocities by the colonial powers which would not spare any Arab country from aggression.

A columnist in Al Dustour daily calls on investors to turn their attention to food processing and dairy industries not only because such venture is lucrative, but also because it saves the country a good deal of foreign currency. Mohammad Daoud says that Jordan has no need to purchase dairy products worth more than JD 22 million annually, when it has a surplus of milk sufficing the local needs and the dairy industry and a great deal more. Jordan also purchases more than JD 4.5 million worth of juice, pickles and processed vegetables each year, at a time when its people can process the extra vegetable and fruits many of which can not be marketed or exported, the writer notes. If the public sector is still hesitant about venturing into this field, Daoud argues, the public sector represented by the ministries of industry and trade and supply can and should lead the way and embark on this business which can save the country a good deal of foreign exchange needed for more vital projects. The writer says since the closure of the Gulf markets before Jordanian products, the country has been left with a huge surplus of agricultural products which, if processed, can be of use in the Kingdoms markets and could possibly be exported to other, far distant countries, earning the country much of the hard currency it badly needs. He calls on the private and public sectors to cooperate and help the national economy at this time of need.

Economic Forum

Wanted: Modern tax policy

By Dr. Abdalla Malki

ONE SHOULD not get tired of talking and writing about the requisites and challenges of the post-war era in the Middle East. There is a vague feeling that a new Mideastern order is in the making, but no certainty as to what it is going to be like. However, democracy and economic freedom seem to be the names of the game. New economic and political strategies will have to be worked out and the successful identification of the appropriate strategies needs the participation of as many parties as possible.

Some countries will need to undertake profound and probably painful political reform such as the Gulf states which additionally will be well advised to reform their economic systems so as to make their public finances a little bit dependent on tax revenues because tax-paying is a genuine characteristic feature of the modern state. Other countries need both economic and political reforms. Jordan is advised to reinforce its democratisation process and introduce certain changes to its basically free economic system as to make it more open and truly liberal.

The Jordanian monetary policy seems to be on the right track. The exchange rate of the dinar is being stabilised after the catastrophe of devaluation and the foreign exchange reserves are being built up in a way that has fortunately permitted us the

luxury of relaxing some of our foreign exchange controls. Most importantly, the monetary policy of the Central Bank has deservedly won the confidence of the public, which can serve as a basis for more spectacular achievements.

The commercial policy seems to have made up its mind. What we have now is a free foreign trade policy that does not envisage higher, ban or quantitative restrictions on imports and exports, together with the freedom to set up domestic enterprises. True this liberalisation was a part of our commitment under Jordan's accord with the International Monetary Fund but it is there anyway and is now needed to project Jordan as a country of a free and open economic system hereafter.

The bottleneck seems to reside in our fiscal policy which we believe is still embracing some outdated notions relating specifically to the tax policy.

First, the levying of taxes, direct and indirect, has been proceeding without giving due regard to the taxable capacity. The tax effort in Jordan is extraordinarily high by all standards, including the academic standards of IMF itself. This means that Jordanian individuals and businesses are overtaxed. Overtaxation forces tax evasion and breeds mistrust between the public and the government.

Second, during the last two years the fiscal policy has been

gearing up to rely more and more on the income tax, not through the broadening of the tax base but via higher tax rates. This policy is thus a victim of the destructive illusion that public revenues can be increased simply by raising tax rates. The experience of the last one or two decades suggests that the contrary is true. High income tax rates induce more tax evasion and they particularly serve to undermine the production incentives and thereby narrow the tax base and thus depress tax proceeds in the final analysis. Hence the widespread practice of cutting income tax rates across the world during the eighties.

Income tax revenues have averaged around 3% of national income. An across-the-board unitary and very low income tax rate of 5 per cent will yield more revenues and, additionally, be very acceptable to tax-payers. (Tax progressiveness can be satisfied by varying this rate from 3 per cent to say 6 per cent or 7 per cent. Such a low rate will therefore be in the better interest of the Treasury, encourage production and thus indirectly bring in additional public revenues. Above all, it will change Jordan into a free and open economy that we need so as to enable us to respond to the challenges and requirements of the new era which is dawning on the Middle East.

NGOs tread carefully on the rocky road to Rio

By Daniel Nelson

PEOPLE everywhere "look to 1992 as our best chance, perhaps our last chance, to save our Earth," according to Mostafa Tolba, head of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Such absurdly overblown rhetoric about next year's U.N. conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED) could come only from within the U.N. itself. For few people outside the world body are aware of the June 1992 conference in Rio de Janeiro; and if they are, they regard it as just another huge U.N. talking shop.

It is already being billed as the Earth Summit, because so many heads of state and government have indicated an interest in attending.

They will all declare their "greenness," but their presence will make the event even more of a jamboree than is already likely for an occasion at which 30,000 people might be present.

As Joseph Wheeler, No. 2 in the conference secretariat in Geneva, points out: "As is the case with other big conferences, not a great deal is done at the conference itself. It's all done in advance."

For UNCED "in advance" means now. One preparatory meeting has been held and three more will take place before the conference carnival reaches Rio.

The secretariat has already decided that the conference will produce an earth charter (a declaration of principles) and "Agenda 21" (a programme for the international community). Conference secretary-general Maurice Strong, who was the UNEP's first executive Director, also wants conventions on atmospheric protection and biodiversity, and perhaps on forests, to be signed in Rio, though not reached by the conference.

The declared aim of the meeting is "to halt and reverse the effects of environmental degradation" while increasing efforts "to promote sustainable and environmentally sound development in all countries." It sounds uncontroversial. Others are taking existing documents off the shelf, sticking on a new title and submitting them. And many governments simply do not like dealing with NGOs.

Says Koy Thomson of IIED: "Such half-heartedness towards national reports, and the near-impossible deadline set by the secretariat, will be a crushing disappointment for those NGOs who saw the reports as both the key to widespread national participation and consultation on issues concerning environment and development, and as the foundation of the conference itself. It's a major missed opportunity."

Failure to integrate NGOs into the conference raises the danger that the event will be a safe government-to-government get-together steering clear of political controversies and choices — PANOS features.

He admits that until now attention has been focussed on

From occupation to lawless vengeance in Kuwait

By Andrew Whitley

NEW YORK — The accounts of abductions, of beatings and humiliation, sometimes of unspeakable torture were depressingly familiar. The treatment meted out to Palestinians and other foreign residents of Kuwait mirrored that suffered by native Kuwaitis at the hands of Iraqis in the seven-month occupation.

During an 18-day mission to Kuwait, Middle East Watch concluded that about 2,000 people had been rounded up arbitrarily since the country's liberation on Feb. 26. Dozens were killed by their Kuwaiti captors, their mutilated bodies dumped on waste piles and beside highways for all to see. Others were deported to Iraq, pushed across the U.S.-controlled border without shoes or documents.

Such tales are not unfamiliar in countries suffering from the aftermath of invasion and civil strife. But in this case abuses occur in a country that owes its regained independence entirely to America and the United States, and the State Department know much more about what is going on than they are letting on.

It may be that the Bush administration is embarrassed by the Kuwaitis' behaviour. It certainly should be. What is inexplicable is its silence in the face of widespread abuses taking place under the noses of U.S. troops.

Interviews with more than 100 people who were detained and released revealed that those responsible for their mistreatment in "safe houses" and police stations often wore

U.S. civil affairs officers in Kuwait are responsible for the maintenance of public security and the prevention of human rights violations. Testimony to my organisation and to the International Red Cross by released detainees puts U.S. officers in places of detention in Kuwait where torture has taken place.

This is not to say that Americans are participating in torture. Diplomats say that when American personnel are present, their role has been "to restrain" abuses. But this acknowledgement shows that the Pentagon and the State Department know much more about what is going on than they are letting on.

It may be that the Bush administration is embarrassed by the Kuwaitis' behaviour. It certainly should be. What is inexplicable is its silence in the face of widespread abuses taking place under the noses of U.S. troops.

Interviews with more than 100 people who were detained and released revealed that those responsible for their mistreatment in "safe houses" and police stations often wore

Kuwaiti army uniforms. Witnesses described how soldiers dropped bodies off in Palestinian neighbourhoods at night.

Kuwaiti claims that the authorities are not involved, and that no harm will come to anyone who did not commit a crime, lack credibility.

While vigilante gangs continue to prowl the streets looking for suspected collaborators, the reign of terror seems increasingly orchestrated. Many of those incarcerated without charges are thought to be held inside brigade headquarters or in the military hospital and prison complex where the Kuwaiti high command is temporarily housed.

Western diplomats have identified seven scions of the ruling Sabah family as among the chief culprits.

What is remarkable is how little shame or unease native Kuwaitis feel about what is going on. They are shell-shocked from their own torment by the Iraqi secret police, and their common reaction is "They had it coming to them."

By "they," Kuwaitis mean not

just the 150,000 Palestinians who remain, out of a long-established community of 350,000, but also Sudanese and Somali workers who are paying the price of their governments' support for Saddam Hussein. Some undoubtedly did collaborate. But that is no excuse for collective punishment or indiscriminate reprisals.

The Sabahs seem to have forgotten that their restoration owed much to a global consensus that the rule of law had to be upheld.

The excuse that can be made for the Kuwaiti government's failure to exert its authority and put a stop to this revenge is that there has been no government to speak of.

Until now, what semblance of officialdom there has been has carried little authority. Military discipline has been reduced to moral suasion. Most frightening is that much of the population — Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti — is armed and shows little inclination to give up weapons.

The writer is executive director of Middle East Watch. This article is reprinted from the New York Times.

Jerusalem Post newspaper.

"The defiance ministry, announcing the release Tuesday, said it was a traditional goodwill gesture to Palestinians to mark Eid Al Fitr.

Cairo

(Continued from page 1)

the U.N. Security Council, with Israel, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians, could work.

Al Ahram, which the government of President Hosni Mubarak often uses for making policy statements, said Egypt still views an international peace conference to be the proper political framework for settling the Arab-Israeli problem.

Mr. Mubarak is currently on a visit to Tripoli for talks with Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi.

Outlining Egypt's policy, Al Ahram also said that exchanging land for peace constitutes a basic principle for moving towards a just and comprehensive settlement.

Consultations

President Mubarak met with Syria's foreign minister Tuesday, then flew off to Libya to talk with Libyan leader Qaddafi, the government announced.

An official said Mr. Mubarak planned to return Tuesday night to prepare for talks Wednesday with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

Mr. Baker is to spend Wednesday night in Cairo and meet on Thursday with Saudi Foreign Minister Saud Al Faisal.

Reasons for Mr. Mubarak's surprise trip to Libya were not disclosed.

Earlier Tuesday, Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharar of Syria gave the Egyptian president a message from President Assad.

"This is within the framework of consultations and exchanging points of view between our countries," Mr. Sharar said at Cairo international airport, where his Egyptian counterpart Esmat Abdul Meguid met him.

Asked whether his trip was to coordinate for Mr. Baker's visit, Mr. Sharar said his discussions with Mr. Mubarak would deal with all recent developments in the region.

Shortly after the meeting, Mr. Sharar returned home. Then Mr. Mubarak, accompanied by Mr. Abdul Meguid and Osama Al Baz, the president's chief political adviser, flew to Libya.

**U.S. congress
reluctant to let
China off human
rights hook**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The international indignation at China's crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators in Tiananmen Square two years ago has largely faded, but lingering anger in the U.S. Congress is causing unease in the White House.

President George Bush's administration prizes its relationship with Peking for strategic reasons and is anxious to avoid a disruption in ties. But in Congress, there is strong sentiment that China's trade benefits should be revoked unless its record on human rights improves.

The administration's differences with China's congressional critics are expected to come into sharp focus next week when the leadership of both congressional houses plans to give an enthusiastic welcome to the Dalai Lama, the exiled spiritual leader of Tibet.

The Dalai Lama maintains that Tibet has been victimised by a Chinese occupation for 40 years and advocates a system of autonomy for his homeland.

In deference to China, U.S. officials do not plan to receive the Dalai Lama.

Also worrisome is the possible Chinese sale to Pakistan of new missiles that may be capable of carrying nuclear and chemical warheads. U.S. officials said Friday they are trying to head off the sale of the missiles, which have a range of 200 to 400 miles (320 to 640 kilometres).

The missiles are in the research and development stage. If they eventually are delivered to Pakistan, the administration would be obliged under congressional direction to impose sanctions on China.

U.S. officials hope the U.S.-China relationship can ride out the challenges these and other issues pose.

But Kenneth G. Lieberthal, a China scholar at the University of Michigan, says, "there is good reason to be concerned about the potential deterioration in the coming months."

During a visit to China late last month, Republican Congressmen Frank Wolf and Chris Smith served notice on Premier Li Peng that Congress may revoke the country's preferential trade status.

They presented a petition to Li seeking the release of 77 people imprisoned or under house arrest because of their religious activities. They also protested China's use of mandatory birth control and forced abortions to limit population growth.

Wolf said the congressmen tried to meet with 40 Tiananmen Square inmates at a Peking prison but were denied permission. Wolf also called attention to allegations that products made under forced labour conditions in China are being exported to the United States in violation of U.S. law.

The House voted by a large margin last year to halt U.S. trade preferences for China, but the measure died when Congress adjourned without action by the other chamber of Congress — the Senate.

China has taken advantage of the relatively open American market, building up a \$10.4-billion trade surplus with the United States last year, up from \$6.2 billion in 1989. According to some estimates, the surplus may reach \$15 billion this year, another sore point with lawmakers who attribute the imbalance to increasing Chinese import restrictions.

But U.S. officials worry that a loss of trade preferences could harm the Chinese economy.

"I agree with the Chinese that it's a human right to have a job and to eat," said one administration official, disagreeing with lawmakers who believe China should be punished.

Bush is expected to extend trade preferences for China in early June. Congress could overturn the decision if both houses act within 30 days.

The administration view is that congressional retaliation against China could be counterproductive. Officials point out that China has been unusually cooperative lately in United Nations Security Council deliberations on the Gulf.

**By Nur Sati
Special to the Jordan Times**

WADI ARABA — "For God's sake, we need help and soon," said an elderly man who has lived in the village of Quriquera all of his life.

When he said this, the man was echoing the feelings of the three thousand inhabitants living in Quriquera, a desolate string of scattered primitive houses (which will be referred to as "village") in the area of Fadlan, Wadi Araba, 150 kilometres north of Aqaba.

This "village," lost in the middle of the barren desert, has been cut off from any form of civilisation leaving the inhabitants without electricity, water, or transportation. Heading south on the Ghor Al Safi-Aqaba road, a dirt road leads to the "village." There are mud houses and some farm land, but the rest is flat desert. There are only hills on the horizon.

The visitors are welcomed by the inhabitants inside a large black tent. The visitors are shocked by this almost "barbarian," rudimentary environment — no furniture, no road, no water, foul stench and sticky flies. However, the locals insist these are good conditions compared to what was seen later.

A middle aged man, Mag Zidan, said that people in this area were divided into three groups. The first group consists of what is considered as the high ranking families, whose men have served in the armed forces, obtained a loan from the Housing Bank and built a house. "This five per cent of the population

now lives in 'comfortable' mud houses," Zidan said.

The lives of the second group depend on cattle raising. These people live in desperate conditions because to raise cattle they need a lot of money which is not available," according to Zidan. These people, around 10 per cent of the population, live in tents.

"We continually ask officials to help us, but so far, nobody seems to care or even listen to us," a

"The visitors are shocked by this almost 'barbarians,' rudimentary environment — no furniture, no road, no water, foul stench and sticky flies. However, the locals insist these are good conditions compared to what was seen later."

Those living well below the poverty line have nothing at all, save the caves or tree houses in which they live. They are considered the third group, living in the highest degree of wretchedness, isolated deep in the "village."

Among these groups, the people are split into three tribes: The Al Azazmeh, Al Saadene and the Ammaraen tribes, distributed across an area of 60 square kilometres.

Once the visitors enter the "village," the dirt road disappears into the brown coloured earth and there is nothing but infinite land. The area lacks water in general. "We have some water wells but they are dirty and can cause malaria and other sorts of water borne diseases," a group of middle aged men told the visitors.

man cried out.

Scanning the faces of these men, they all look middle aged. Even the young men — tired, haggard, malnourished and constantly striving for a better life for their young ones.

All children, except one, are not fully schooled. That girl was extremely lucky. Her father was able to afford sending her to school in Ghor Al Safi.

Nobody can afford sending their children to proper schools. The people in the "village" get between JD 10 and JD 40 per person, a month, from the Ministry of Social Development. Thus, the rest attend school in the nearby "village."

According to the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) survey of Quriquera, there is one male school for 63 students and six

teachers from the fourth to the tenth grade. There is another school with 82 male and female students and seven female teachers providing education from the first until the eighth grade. Only the first three grades are mixed, the report said.

Most of the people pleaded with the visitors to let their children have proper education. "We need our children to learn," they said. "Education is the only way out of poverty," many locals echoed.

There is no water in the school, no electricity, no furniture or books. "We had an electricity generator but that broke down four years ago," a little boy in the crowd said. The NHF report reveals that even the bathroom in the school shared between the boys and girls. Another burden for the children, to attain the little education they can get, is trying to reach the school. They have to walk between seven to 15 kilometres twice everyday.

One young boy was pushed towards the visitors. He had no hands. With a quivering voice, Sayed Hamed Suleiman, 12, told the visitors: "I was on a pick-up when I found a car which looked like a tuna fish car. When I got close to it and picked it up, I found out it was a bomb. But it was too late for I saw my hands blow out and fly away."

The problem, he added, is that the "school dismissed me saying I cannot learn without hands." Asked if he would like to study if he had a chance to, he said with tears in his eyes: "I really would like to learn and study, but how can I? They do not let me."

Health services in the "village"

are even more primitive than the educational services. Everything is deficient. The NHF reports that the area lacks any kind of basic medical services. The visitors are limited to a small clinic with one male nurse and some expired medicines, but no doctor has set foot in the area.

However, when the visitors arrived, health equipment was available. But, according to a local, "the health centre that is now available was not there a week ago. It was built and equipped because of Her Majesty Queen Noor's visit and we will be denied this right once the visitors leave."

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they are (in their clothes) and they even bury them with their lifetime possessions.

Speaking to some women, the visitors asked how the people take their sick to the clinic. "We take a ride," the woman said. Even though there is no form of transportation, no telephones, no post delivery, within any of the surrounding areas, there is not any voluntary organisation to help, neither.

Take a ride how? The visitors later were told: "We carry the sick to the main Ghor Al Safi-Aqaba road and from there we hitch a ride to the hospital or wherever we want to go. Of

donated a sum of money to be used for building one," the women added.

Some of those who do fast, because they have battered radios, said: "We fast on tea and bread." The "kitchen" is some space on the sand covered with tree branches and plastic on top to prevent rain from entering. But the plastic was filled with holes. There is wood (long, skinny twigs) on the ground which was used as an oven. Some houses had cooking oil and a few pots and pans.

Some live on tea and bread everyday. Others, in the first and second group, live on potatoes, rice and a few other vegetables grown on the farm.

The children in the "village" are malnourished. They walk barefooted, pick up odd pieces on the ground and automatically put them in their mouths. There are so many flies on their faces that the children no longer shake them away. They have no toys. They sit by their mothers all day, in their "houses." Their mothers hibernate in their houses, under the shade, waiting for their husbands to return from work.

The organisation headed by Princess Alia al Faisal, Al Adi Al Waideh, is planning to improve the situation of the people, giving priority to children. The organisation will also develop the infrastructure.

These people are in dire need of help. The sad part is that Quriquera is not the only underdeveloped area, "there are many people like us all over the country. But everybody has so far turned a blind eye," a "villager" said.

Weapons training and voting vs. staying home

**By Edith M. Lederer
The Associated Press**

KUWAIT CITY — Iraqi occupation transformed Ismaa Al Matruk from a carefree college student into a resistance fighter and feminist.

Now she wants weapons training

and the right to vote, not the old life of servants and shopping.

Mariam Hussein Saia was tortured out of her house and waited for hours on the bread line to feed her seven children. Iraq forced Kuwaiti women to be strong, she said, but now it is time to stay home, wear a traditional black robe and leave politics to the men.

For Kuwaiti women who stayed behind when Iraqi tanks rumbled into the emirate Aug. 2, life changed dramatically. Servants fled-husbands and children who left the house were arrested, sometimes shot.

After lives of the pampered luxury bought by oil, women were forced to assume the unfamiliar male role of providing for their families — because they were less likely targets.

Some used their loose robes, called abayas, to conceal guns, messages and clandestine newspapers for the resistance.

It was a politicising experience

for many Kuwaiti women to spend seven months actively or passively resisting the Iraqis, being the family mainstay and doing unaccustomed housework.

They presented a petition to Li seeking the release of 77 people imprisoned or under house arrest because of their religious activities. They also protested China's use of mandatory birth control and forced abortions to limit population growth.

Wolf said the congressmen tried to meet with 40 Tiananmen Square inmates at a Peking prison but were denied permission. Wolf also called attention to allegations that products made under forced labour conditions in China are being exported to the United States in violation of U.S. law.

The House voted by a large margin last year to halt U.S. trade preferences for China, but the measure died when Congress adjourned without action by the other chamber of Congress — the Senate.

China has taken advantage of the relatively open American market, building up a \$10.4-billion trade surplus with the United States last year, up from \$6.2 billion in 1989. According to some estimates, the surplus may reach \$15 billion this year, another sore point with lawmakers who attribute the imbalance to increasing Chinese import restrictions.

But U.S. officials worry that a loss of trade preferences could harm the Chinese economy.

"I agree with the Chinese that it's a human right to have a job and to eat," said one administration official, disagreeing with lawmakers who believe China should be punished.

Bush is expected to extend trade preferences for China in early June. Congress could overturn the decision if both houses act within 30 days.

The administration view is that congressional retaliation against China could be counterproductive. Officials point out that China has been unusually cooperative lately in United Nations Security Council deliberations on the Gulf.



Jetset of war — A Kuwaiti woman waits with her shopping, surrounded by rubbish still to be collected.

Immediately after the invasion, 200 women demonstrated, holding up pictures of their emir and chanting "Kuwait for the Kuwaitis." Women organised the first major postwar protest, demanding that Iraq free all Kuwaiti prisoners of war.

"I feel myself behave differently. I see things more clearly. No hypocrisy. No more spoiled women of Kuwait."

Kuwaiti women are well-educated, Ms. Bastaki said, and should be allowed to vote.

"What is the difference between men and women except physical strength and shape?" she

asked. "To be a member of the Majlis (parliament) and be able to vote doesn't require strength."

Even women who prefer to leave politics to men said surviving the occupation gave them new strength and self-confidence.

Zahra Hussein Al Ali Moul, who said she was probably about 100 years old, showed a reporter how she danced when the Iraqis fled, turning around and around in her abaya.

When she said "God should kill Saddam," several dozen women waiting with her in a bread line shouted agreement. She laughed, eyes twinkling, and said she'd never danced in public before.

Mrs. Hussein Sala said: "Thanks to God, I became stronger," after telling of being harassed by Iraqi soldiers who looked for weapons in her house and searched her car.

"We encourage women to go into careers like teaching and medicine, but we don't want women to vote in Gulf countries," she said. "Men are always better than women at running the country."

A woman who identified herself only as Fitch said women want to do more for their country, "but I have my freedom without voting. The men can do it better."

The emir and crown prince have said giving women the vote is a possibility, but no timetable has been mentioned and many women believe victory won't be

swift or easy.

Imad Al Saif, a lawyer, described himself as one of the few Kuwaiti men who support political rights for women.

"Our society has a lot of old traditions, especially with playing a role in political life," he said. "We still have men who don't believe women have a role."

Women earned more respect from men during the occupation, said Huda Sale, 26, but "I think more women's liberation will threaten men's authority and I think that's very difficult for men to accept."

Ms. Sale, a postgraduate student of philosophy, said that, in addition to not having the vote, a woman is paid less, must have her father's permission to marry, can be divorced without being informed and cannot keep the children.

"We will be fighting on all these fronts," she said.

Critics slam plan for English Premier Division

LONDON (AP) — English soccer headed for a state of civil war when its governing body suggested setting up an 18-team Premier League and the clubs' representatives threatened to defy it.

The big clubs, such as Arsenal and Manchester United, welcomed the Football Association (F.A.) proposal to operate a pruned league from the 1992-93 season instead of the present 20-team first division.

But smaller clubs in the 92-strong football league, which runs the current four-division operation, condemned the move, which will be voted on in June.

Bill Fox, president of the Football League, described the proposal as upsetting and divisive. He said it would mean the F.A. ending the top clubs away from the existing league.

"I am president of a 92-club league and intend to remain president of a 92-club league," he said.

"If clubs wish to opt out then of course they know the consequences," said Fox, indicating that

the existing league might not welcome back breakaway clubs that got relegated from a Premier League.

"I don't find it acceptable that the first division should be hijacked from the football league," Fox said. "I thought football needed unity but that doesn't seem the view of the governing body."

While the British media dubbed the F.A.'s suggestion a super-league, all the proposal does is bring English soccer into line with most leagues in Europe.

The F.A. argues a smaller league would help national teams in Britain, giving players an occasional weekend off before international games involving England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and also Ireland.

And the big clubs, who hope to clean up in major domestic and European Cup competitions, will have extra breathing space for replays.

"We wholeheartedly support Football Association's proposals which we believe are essential to ensure a successful and healthy

football industry in general and the England team in particular," said Ken Friar, chief executive of standings leader Arsenal.

"The F.A. are to be congratulated upon their initiative."

Manchester United chief executive Martin Edwards also welcomed the plan.

"Reducing the number of games will leave players fitter and fresher for their clubs and for (their) countries. The important principle is that leading clubs will be in control of their own destiny," Edwards said.

The majority of the owners believe that bigger leagues mean more games and, therefore, more money for all.

Derby County managing director Stuart Webb, whose team is last-placed in the 20-strong first division, hit out at the move.

"It is another classic example of the rich clubs trying to richer," he said.

"Big clubs have the bulk of the sponsorship and the bulk of the TV money — leaving the majority of clubs to fight for the scraps."

Barcelona seeks to topple Juventus

BARCELONA (R) — Spanish Soccer League leaders Barcelona continue their quest for a glorious treble when they clash with Juventus of Turin in a European Cup Winners' Cup semifinal first leg Wednesday.

Four points clear in the league and still in the Spanish Cup, Barcelona would love to put the icing on the cake by lifting the Cup Winners' Cup, a trophy they last won in 1989.

Juventus, who knocked out Liege of Belgium in the quarter-final, bad an unhappy time last Saturday, going down 1-0 away to Fiorentina after missing a penalty.

They are now fourth in the Italian League, eight points behind leaders Sampdoria.

The Spanish side believe they have the all-round strength to repeat that success.

"Juventus has tremendous tradition and great players, but

we have the better squad overall," said Danish International striker Michael Laudrup, who played several seasons with Juventus before joining Barcelona.

The Catalans, who reached the last four with a 4-3 aggregate victory over Dynamo Kiev, had the perfect warm-up last weekend when they scored a comfortable 3-1 league win away to Real Burgos.

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They are now fourth in the Italian League, eight points behind leaders Sampdoria.

Saturday's game was a personal disaster for Italian idol Roberto Baggio, who joined Juventus from Fiorentina last May for a world record \$13 million.

He was given a rough reception

by his former fans, refused to take a penalty and was taken off.

Juventus coach Gigi Maifredi described Barcelona as one of the strongest teams in the world with great attacking ability.

He is expected to play midfielder Eugenio Corini in a mainly defensive line-up and leave another 1990 World Cup star, Salvatore "Toto" Schillaci, on the substitutes bench.

Top-scorer in the World Cup, Schillaci has not scored a league goal since mid-November and his agent Monday said the player was "100 per cent certain to leave the club" if he was repeatedly left on the team.

Barcelona's Dutch coach Johan Cruyff, recovering from a heart attack and by-pass surgery in February, met his playing and coaching staff Monday to encourage them for the big test. But deputy coach Carlos Rexach stays on the bench for the game.

Legia Warsaw defence in disarray for match against Man. United

WARSAW (R) — Legia Warsaw, the surprise European Cup Winners' Cup semifinalists, host England's Manchester United Wednesday with their defense in complete disarray.

The Poles, in their most important match since losing to Feyenoord Rotterdam in the 1970 European Cup semifinal, will be without almost all of their first-choice defenders.

Goalkeeper Maciej Szczesny is banned for four matches while international defender Dariusz Kubicz is suspended.

Centre-back Krzysztof Budka has not recovered from a month-old ankle injury while fellow central-defender, Arkadiusz Grecz, is struggling to get himself fit in time.

Four other top players are also injured.

But coach Wladyslaw Szachurski, a defender 21 years ago against Feyenoord, can count on striker Wojciech Kowalczyk who

scored both goals Saturday as Legia, now ninth in Poland's first division, beat lowly motor Lublin 2-0.

Kowalczyk also scored twice against Sampdoria, the beaten holder of the Cup Winners' Cup, in the 2-2 draw in Italy which gave Legia a 3-2 aggregate win in the quarter-final.

Szczesny picked up his ban in that match for biting Italian international Roberto Mancini during the final minutes.

United manager Alex Ferguson also has some problems. His captain Bryan Robson is suspended while defender Mike Phelan pulled a hamstring Saturday and is doubtful.

But key midfielders Paul Ince and Welsh international Clayton Blackmore, who missed the 1-1 league draw against lowly Aston Villa Saturday, are both set to return.

The English club will also have

Brondby face uphill battle against Roma

COPENHAGEN (R) — Brondby, the first Danes to reach the semifinals of a European Club competition, aim to show Roma a trick or two in the UEFA Cup Wednesday.

The home game will be the toughest task in the Copenhagen club's brief history but Brondby, the clear underdogs, have made something of a habit of upsetting the big-name teams.

They have an unbeaten home record in Europe this season and refuse to be overawed by the star-studded visitors.

Team coach Morten Olsen, the former Danish national captain, said the team's tactics will be to prevent a quick Roma goal and then to impose Brondby's own style on the game.

The Danish League leaders' high-pressure approach of constantly harrying the man with the ball can throw more stylish but

less physical opponents off their stride.

Olsen acknowledged that man for man Roma were the better team. "But so were Eintracht Frankfurt, and so were Bayer Leverkusen..." he said, naming the clear underdogs, have made something of a habit of upsetting the big-name teams.

He is counting on Brondby's team spirit, organisation and refusal to be impressed to see the team through.

Where the Danes stand resolute, the Italians are uncertain about the future of their club which may soon be up for sale following the death of president Dino Viola in January.

Against Brondby, they will be strengthened by the return of Italian international midfielder Giuseppe Giannini who missed Saturday's 1-1 draw with city

rivals Lazio.

Coach Ottavio Bianchi also has Brazilian Alair and Germans Thomas Berthold and Rudi Voeller in defence and attack.

Brondby are trying to shake off the memory of their last two matches, both against domestic rivals AaB Aalborg.

In the first match, an own goal knocked them out of the Danish Cup semifinal, and then, in a league match Saturday, they were two goals ahead at halftime but still drew 2-2.

From goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel to striker Bent Christensen, Brondby have about half the Danish team, including captain Lars Olsen, and are a well-balanced side.

Christensen was top goalscorer in the league last year and heads of the list again in the current season.

Spartak and Marseille driven by same ambition

MOSCOW (R) — A driving ambition to score a notable first for their respective countries links Spartak Moscow and Marseille on the eve of Wednesday's European Cup semifinal.

Spartak, a young side with no real stars, have already dismissed Napoli and Real Madrid in their quest to become the first Soviet team to reach the final of Europe's top club competition.

And Marseille president Bernard Tapie's star-studded team, who beat AC Milan in the quarter-finals, are bidding to become the first French winners of a European club trophy.

"It's always the same when you achieve something great. It's difficult to re-motivate afterwards."

Spartak trainer Oleg Romantsev has said little about his plans except that he will probably use the same team which beat Real 3-1 in Madrid and secured their semifinals berth.

That includes striker Dmitri Radchenko, who scored twice in Spain, outstanding young sweeper Vassili Kulikov and international forward Valery Schurany.

The young Moscow club is known for its intricate style based on short, fast passing and quick moving off the ball. Many players, such as Kulikov, Schurany and Igor Shalimov, were members of the Soviet team who won the Olympic gold medal in Seoul.

Against both Napoli and Real, Spartak had to be content with 0-0 home draws and Romantsev said he believed his team capable of winning in Marseille if the French champions hold them in Moscow.

"The important thing will be to stop them scoring goals here," Kulikov said.

Augenthaler hopes to prove critics wrong

MUNICH, Germany (R) — Libero Klaus Augenthaler, criticised recently as too slow, old and fragile for Bayern Munich's European campaign, will be battling against time as well as Red Star Belgrade in Wednesday's semifinal.

The 33-year-old German World Cup star has been attacked in the domestic media for being past his prime as Bayern have shown hitherto form ahead of the first home leg in Munich.

"They had Milan in their heads for two-and-a-half months," Goehtals said.

"It's always the same when you achieve something great. It's difficult to re-motivate afterwards."

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Internazionale lifted by return of Brehme

LISBON (R) — The return to fitness of German defender Andreas Brehme has lifted Internazionale's spirits ahead of their UEFA Cup semifinal first leg tie with Sporting Lisbon Wednesday.

The Italian side is full of confidence after a 5-1 league win over Bari Saturday with attacking left-back Brehme creating three of the goals on his first appearance

for a month.

Brehme is absolutely fundamental to our game. His crosses are exceptional and a real invitation to a striker to score," said his team mate and fellow German Lothar Matthaeus.

"There is no better player than him on the left flank, his attacking drive is overwhelming," he added.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNHA HIRSCH
1990 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

HELPING DECLARER MISPLACE A CARD

East-West vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♦ A 9
♦ A K Q 4
♦ A 10 5 5
♦ A J 2

WEST
♦ 8 6 3
♦ J 9 7 6
♦ K J 3 2
♦ 3

SOUTH
♦ K 10 5 4
♦ 5
♦ Q 9 7 4
♦ 8 5 4

The bidding:

South West North East
2 + Pass 2 NT Pass
3 + Pass 3 + Pass
3 NT Pass 4 + Dbl
Pass Pass 6 + Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Three of ♦
The Russians came! As a result of glasnost, Russian players took part for the first time in a world bridge championship in Geneva, Switzerland. They came armed with complex bidding machinery, but on

the spade.

Not unnaturally, declarer virtually would have been forced to make his contract. The percentage play in trumps would have been to take a finesse for the king, so declarer can pick up trumps and bring in the spade suit with the help of a finesse.

Andy Capp

I'M A DEAD LOSS — SNIFF, I REALLY AM... I'M NO USE TO ANYBODY...

OH, LOR, I'S OFF AGAIN

DON'T DENY IT, PET. I AM A DEAD LOSS... IT'S A WONDER YOU DIDN'T CLEAR OFF YEARS AGO —

WHO'S ARGUIN'?

GRRR!

IT'S OKAY — I'VE BEEN TO BINGO ONCE THIS WEEK, ANYWAY

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Average L. American incomes fall for third year in a row

WASHINGTON (AP) — Average Latin American incomes fell in 1990 for the third year in a row, the Inter-American Development Bank has reported.

Production in Brazil, which accounts for more than a third of the area's total, dropped by four per cent. Since population rises by two per cent a year or more, the average income dropped even further — there were fewer goods to be shared by more people.

In 1989 the average Brazilian's income was \$2,550, according to the World Bank. A six per cent decline would bring it down to a total of \$2,400.

"It is now more urgent than ever that the region and the international community coordinate their efforts to place Latin America and the Caribbean once again on the road to economic

development," said the bank's annual report.

It noted a decline in living standards, especially for the very poor, and "uncontrolled growth of the informal sector" — a reference to smuggling, black markets and drug trafficking. It also spoke of "deteriorating social indicators," meaning poor health and education, and burdensome debt.

Foreign debt was estimated to have grown by \$3.5 billion in the year, due to a further piling up of \$10 billion in unpaid interest to a total of \$27 billion.

The Inter-American Development Bank, a multi-government body, attributed the overall situation to "economic adjustment measures" — cuts in government spending, attempts to increase exports, reduce inflation and

other official actions. The object of such measures is to help keep up with debt payments and put countries in a better financial position.

The rise in oil prices caused by the conflict in the Gulf made matters worse for most countries. Those with oil to sell, especially Venezuela and Mexico, increased their total income.

For the 1990s the bank nevertheless had an optimistic forecast: Total income increasing up to five per cent annually by the year 2000 if policy changes continue.

But it added that a less optimistic scenario could mean an annual production increase of only 2.3 per cent — no increase in average incomes but still better than the 1980s which showed an overall decline.

Cardinals say local churches must help finance Vatican

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Dioceses around the world will have to come up with money to help the Holy See plug its persistent budget deficits, Vatican officials said.

The deficit has been covered mainly by "Peter's pence," the annual offering of Roman Catholics to the Pope that has been bringing in more than \$10 million a year.

But that money should be used for special charitable work, such as meeting the urgent needs of the church in Eastern Europe, said American Cardinal Edmund Szoka, the Holy See's financial chief.

He told a special meeting of church leaders on the Vatican's financial problems that it therefore will fall on the shoulders of local churches to help the Vatican finance its operations.

The Vatican has been reporting a deficit since Pope John Paul II decided to lift some of the secrecy covering church finances.

The most recent figures available are a forecast of a record deficit of \$36 million for 1990.

Cardinal Jose Rosario Castillo Lara of Venezuela, another top financial official at the Vatican, said financial help from local churches to the Vatican was actually an "obligation" under church law.

He said such funding must be coordinated by the national bishops conference of each country.

Castillo Lara said the Vatican's financial problems were not a result of poor management but stemmed from a "radical dispropportion" between its revenues and its growing needs.

Dollar's rise and weak growth abroad threaten U.S. exports

WASHINGTON (R) — A rapidly rising dollar and weak economic growth abroad could mean trouble for U.S. economic policy-makers who are looking to exports to help pull the economy out of recession and feed the recovery, economists say.

"Up until appreciation of the dollar occurred, we thought net exports were going to be a powerful cushion for the economy," said Laurence Meyer, who heads an economic consulting firm in St. Louis, Missouri.

"The best hope now is that net exports will be neutral or a small, almost negligible contributor to growth," he added.

Only a few months ago, officials were worried about the weakness of the dollar which hit a record low of 1.4435 marks on Feb. 11.

With the decline of the dollar

making U.S. goods a bargain in overseas markets, Bush administration officials and Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan pointed to strong exports as one of the few bright spots in the U.S. economy.

But since the end of the Gulf war, the U.S. currency has surged 10.3 per cent against the Deutsche mark and 4.6 per cent against the yen, making U.S. products more expensive.

Already, the rising currency, coupled with economic weakness abroad is giving U.S. businesses a headache.

International Business Machines (IBM) Corp. cited a worldwide economic slowdown last month when it told investors that first quarter earnings would be less than expected. Industry analysts said the strong dollar is a

disaster for IBM.

Undersecretary of the Treasury David Mulford told reporters last month: "We are concerned about the rapidity of the rise. We are not seeking a stronger dollar."

Since 1987, the United States has been narrowing its trade shortfall with the rest of the world. The recession has slowed imports and while export growth has slowed since the boom year of 1988, imports have been slowing at a greater pace.

Financial analysts said the dollar's recent strength is due largely to the weakness of overseas economies. Australia, Britain and Canada are in recession, while France and Italy are near recession and Japan's growth is slowing.

Germany, having problems with the cost of reunifying east

and west, has raised taxes and its economy is slowing to a crawl.

Factors feeding the dollar's strength are falling interest rates in other countries, the psychological lift brought on by the quick end to the Gulf war and concern about the political problems in the Soviet Union, said Allen Sinai, an economist with the Boston Co., an investment advisory firm.

"The dollar's recent strength certainly won't help our exports. Neither will the slowdown worldwide," Sinai said.

Stephen Cooney, director of international investment and finance at the National Association of Manufacturers, said if the dollar stabilizes at recent levels of about 1.70 marks and 140 yen, it will not have a major impact on U.S. exports.

Romania's new liberal law opens door to direct foreign investment

BUCHAREST (R) — Romania has opened the gates to direct foreign investment with a liberal new law allowing full foreign ownership, capital protection, repatriation of profits and tax breaks to boost the transition to a market economy.

The foreign investment law passed by parliament last week will take effect some time this month after publication in the official gazette.

The most significant restriction is that only a maximum 15 per cent of profits made in the Romanian currency, the leu, may be transferred abroad in hard currency.

Foreign investors will also not be allowed to own land or buy residential buildings unrelated to the business investment.

The expatriates they will be allowed to employ in Romania will be limited to experts and managers. They will not be able to import blue-collar labour.

Under Stalinist dictator Nico-

lae Ceausescu, overthrown in the December 1989 revolution, foreign investment was restricted to minority stakes in joint ventures on a very limited scale.

Foreign investors will now be free to set up new companies in Romania — wholly owned or with part-Romanian ownership — or buy stocks and shares in existing Romanian enterprises.

They may lease or buy commercial real estate and industrial plant and exploit natural resources.

Investment legislation in other East European countries has been only partly successful in attracting Western investment as it has left many outstanding problems.

Foreign investors will not be subject to profit tax for five years if they invest in industry, farming or construction, three years in exploration, communications and transport and two years in trading, tourism, banking, insurance and other services.

Further tax advantages, including reduced tax rates, will apply for several years after the expiry of the initial tax-free period.

The law states that all economic sectors are open to foreign investors as long as their activities pose no threat to national security, the environment, public order, health or morality.

Investments will not be nationalised, expropriated or re-

quisitioned except in the public interest. In such cases compensation will be "prompt, adequate and effective."

Imports of machinery, equipment, vehicles and other investment items will be duty-free. Imported raw materials and supplies will be exempt from duty for the first two years.

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The government has also slashed the red tape that held up foreign investments in the past. Investors will apply to a new body, the Romanian Development Agency, to register investment projects.

Shipping meeting urges renewal of world fleet to boost safety

OSLO (R) — Representatives of the international shipping community called Tuesday for a renewal of the ageing world fleet and more training of crews in order to help avert disasters at sea.

"The accident rate is showing signs of rising, after a long period of improvement," William O'Neil, secretary-general of the United Nations' International Maritime Organisation (IMO).

told a two-day conference on safety at sea.

"Statistics show quite conclusively that old ships have more accidents than new ones," he said at the start of the meeting.

"Life extension can only be justified if safety is made a priority, rather than profit but I wonder how often this happens," he added.

About 250 shipowners and representatives of governments, maritime bodies, classification societies and trade unions are attending the Oslo meeting, organised by Norwegian authorities.

The need to improve safety at sea has been highlighted by recent major oil spills from tankers and disasters such as the Scandinavian Star ferry blaze off Norway a year ago, which killed 158 people.

Several speakers mentioned increasing public demand to improve safety at sea to save lives and prevent environmental disasters.

The shipping industry's reputation worldwide is not very high at the moment, John Lyons, vice chairman of the International Chamber of Shipping, said.

Chinese legislature approves programme and new tax law

BEIJING (AP) — China's legislature approved draft versions of changes of wording in the outline of the nation's economic plans for the next five and 10 years, at the final meeting of its annual session Tuesday.

The 2,610 delegates, who attended the closing session of the National People's Congress also approved a civil procedure law, a new income tax law for foreign businesses, the state budget and several annual reports.

The major task of the 16-day congress was to study, revise and approve the drafts of China's 10-year programme and five-year plan, which set basic economic policies and priorities.

This was the first time the leadership has drawn up a decade-long plan.

The new income tax law for foreign enterprises goes into effect July 1, annulling two separate income tax laws for foreign businesses promulgated earlier. It standardises the income tax on foreign businesses, which had varied in the past depending on locality.

AVISO A TODOS LOS ESPAÑOLES RESIDENTES EN JORDANIA

El proximo 26 de Mayo se celebraran elecciones municipales y autonomicas en Espana. Los espanoles residentes en el extranjero que deseen ejercer su derecho de voto deberan comunicarlo a la Embajada de Espana. A tal efecto seran expuestas a partir de hoy dia 10 de Abril y hasta el dia 17, inclusive, las listas electorales. En este plazo se podra presentar toda reclamacion administrativa sobre la inclusion o exclusion en el censo. Para consultar las listas o para mayor informacion: Embajada de Espana Primer circulo - C/Reina Zein Jabal Amman - Amman Telf. 622140 / 624187

Vietnam minister offers workers to 'anywhere'

HANOI (R) — Vietnam wants to send its labour force to any country which needs workers. Labour Minister Tran Dinh Hoan was quoted as saying Monday.

"We will continue sending workers to the Soviet Union and some other Eastern European countries," he said in the daily Hanoi Moi.

"At the same time we will widen the market by sending our labour to the Middle East, Africa, the European Community, North Europe, Southeast Asian

countries, Laos and Cambodia," he said.

Vietnam has sent workers abroad since 1980, mainly to the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and Iraq, in return for aid.

About two thirds of 280,000 overseas workers have returned home because of the collapse of socialism in Europe and the Gulf war, depriving Vietnam of foreign exchange and swelling the ranks of the unemployed.

Scandal rocks Brazil's social security system

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (AP) — A scandal involving billions of dollars from Brazil's social security system has shaken the government and prompted a high-level investigation.

Brazil's leading circulation daily said that government investigators listed \$5.93 billion in uncollected revenue or misappropriations from the \$25 billion retirement programme.

There was no immediate government response to the report by the Folha de Sao Paulo newspaper, which carried comments from officials from the programme and the ministries of labour and economy.

President Fernando Collor de Mello, who took office pledging to fight corruption, has declared "open season" on fraud involving the programme. The nation's police chief, Romen Tuma, has compared its management to Swiss cheese: "It's full of holes, and there's fraud everywhere," he recently told reporters.

Thousands of fictitious retirees and people representing deceased retirees are believed to be receiving benefits nationwide. Collor ordered an investigation after the labour minister said he found nothing illegal during an internal inquiry and complained that rats had eaten many key files.

The scandal broke March 21, when representative Maurilio Ferreira Lima obtained a leaked payroll printout that indicated 315 retirees were receiving monthly benefits worth between \$7,500 and \$31,000.

In a country where half the population takes home just \$60 per month, the disclosure caused a widespread outrage.

Days later, police arrested an 81-year-old man, ordered labour Minister Antonio Magri, who oversees social security, to present a full report.

But Magri said he found only 31 people where receiving large retirement payments, none illegally.

When pressed to explain the figures on the leaked payroll sheet, Magri said the money might never have been paid out — a claim greeted by much skepticism by Lima and the news media.

The major Rio newspaper O Globo ran a front page cartoon of Magri dressed as Sherlock Holmes, saying: "I will now announce who is not ripping off social security."

The minister compounded his problems with off-the-cuff remarks to journalists.

Pressed about whether he would be fired because of his failed investigation, he said: "My situation is not good but it could be worse. I could have cancer or AIDS."

In response to the widespread criticism, Collor appointed the high-level panel. Magri is not a member.

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LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

Tuesday, April 9, 1991	
Central Bank official rates	
Buy	Sell
U.S. dollar 677.0	681.0
Pound Sterling 1194.8	1202.0
Deutschmark 400.2	402.6
Swiss franc 471.7	474.5
French franc 118.3	119.0
Japanese yen (for 100)	494.2 497.2
Dutch	

South Africa presents bill to scrap race classification

CAPE TOWN (R) — The South African government published a draft law Tuesday to end race classification, the basis of the 43-year-old apartheid system dividing ruling whites from the voiceless black majority.

The six-line proposal, which is certain to be accepted by the National Party-dominated parliament, implements the last of several sweeping reforms announced by President F.W. De Klerk on Feb. 1 this year.

It proposes the repeal of 10 laws that enforce race classification at birth and amendments to four other laws to remove sections concerning racial definitions.

The Population Registration Act allocates everybody to one of 10 racial categories and has been used to split families, with parents and children forced to live in different areas.

The repeal bill adds, however, that while children born after its

passage through parliament will not be classified by race, government can continue on the basis of existing racial divisions.

"Notwithstanding the repeal of the Population Registration Act, 1950, anything done in terms thereof shall... remain in force as if the repeal had not taken place," the bill says.

A government official said this section meant that segregated education and whites-only elections could continue until a new constitution is agreed and implemented.

De Klerk has promised to negotiate South Africa's transition from white rule to democracy, including full political rights for blacks, who outnumber whites by five to one.

He said in February he would scrap race classification in a package of fundamental reforms including the repeal of residential segregation and an end to land apartheid, which reserves 87 per

cent of the country for white farmers.

"The South African statute book will be devoid within months of the... cornerstones of apartheid," he said.

De Klerk's reforms enraged the white right, but Western governments quickly signalled approval by promising to review and-apartheid sanctions when all the changes had been put to parliament.

Hundreds of residents fled the Mandela Park Camp at Kadehong, east of Johannesburg, to take overnight refuge in a hospital and churches when gangs from neighbouring Holomisa Park Camp, some with rifles and spears, invaded late Monday.

"Thirteen people have been killed in Kadehong since Sunday. The situation is quiet now and police are on the scene to establish the cause of the violence," a police spokesman said.

Nine people were killed Sunday after a rally by the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party.

Manila banks bombed, security tightened

BORNE-SULINOWO, Poland (AP) — The Soviet Red Army began its long-awaited pullout from Poland Tuesday as 60 soldiers clambered aboard a 20-wagon train of missile launchers and trucks headed for home.

The withdrawal began in heavy rain after a late-morning ceremony at a railway siding, which included speeches by Soviet and Polish generals and a band playing the Soviet national anthem.

The train, carrying members of the Guards Missile Brigade, was leaving under the first phase of a permanent pullout by the Red Army, which has been stationed on Polish soil since evicting the German occupiers in 1945.

Soviet Commander Gen. Viktor Dubynin told the troops at this base in northwest Poland that their mission to guarantee "the independence of Poland" had been successfully completed.

Children held up a banner reading, "thank you for your services in the Northern Group of Forces."

The approximately 1,100 members of the Guards Missile Brigade will be withdrawn over the next two months, with their unit disbanded when it reaches Leningrad, said Lt. Gen. Nikolai Marashov, Dubynin's deputy.

Feelings on the withdrawal were mixed among Poles living near the sprawling base, one of the largest military training areas in Europe.

One man said he regretted the end of illegal gasoline sales by the Soviet soldiers to hard-pressed local farmers.

But Zygmund Lichwa, the Polish railway official in charge of the troop train, said, "each country has its own army, which looks after its own borders. That is the way it should be."

Before the departure, a Polish general denied that both sides had agreed on a withdrawal timetable.

"The decision is unilateral," Polish Gen. Zdzislaw Ostrowski said Monday of the Soviet plans. "And we have not been informed about the details of the withdrawals planned for this year."

Dubynin, Soviet commander of

Soviet troops begin pullout from Poland

the Northern Forces Group, had claimed at the same news conference that Poland and the Soviet Union developed a joint withdrawal plan.

During months of tense negotiations, Poland demanded that all the approximately 50,000 Soviet troops pull out by the end of 1991, as is planned for Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The Soviets, meanwhile, say they will not fully vacate Poland before the end of 1993.

Dubynin said that the final deadline for the Soviet departure would be agreed on by the "political leadership" of their countries. Polish President Lech Walesa is expected to travel to Moscow in May to try to settle the issue in talks with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Dubynin accused Polish politicians of stirring up an anti-Soviet atmosphere in Poland. Some "try not to remember those times" when the Soviet Union "liberated" Poland after World War II, he said.

But he concluded: "We are going home now. There is no alternative."

Borne-Sulinowo is located about 100 kilometers northeast of Warsaw. It is a town of 20,000 Soviet troops and their families sheltered in a thick forest off the nearest road. About 100 reporters turned up Monday in response to an invitation from the Soviet army to witness the pullout.

By year end, Dubynin pledged, 13,000 troops amounting to some 30 units will have left Poland to return to the Soviet Union. Poland will acquire seven vacated garrisons, he said.

About 1,500 railway cars hauling soldiers and equipment will leave within a month, he said. "At Polish request, the heavy weapons are to go first."

Dubynin confirmed that the Soviet army had removed nuclear weapons from Poland in the middle of 1990.

As for when the last Soviet troop will leave, the Polish general said: "We think a sooner deadline can be agreed and this is the direction of our negotiations."

"The initial assessment is that the latest wave of bombings... is a continuing effort by the rightist rebel movement to sow terror and destabilise the government," national police spokesman Superintendent Crescencio Marashov said in a radio interview.

"They feel the public has forgotten them and that they have to do something dramatic so that the people will know they are still there," Marashov said.

National Police Director-General Cezar Nazareno immediately ordered police around Manila to step up patrols and secure business and financial districts.

"The order is to cover all possible areas where the terrorists might likely strike again," Marashov added.

The bombs, made of sticks of dynamite and plastic explosives, exploded within minutes of each other at three branches of the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), one of the country's biggest commercial banks.

They blew off part of a roof, started a fire and wrecked windows and office equipment. One janitor was injured.

A bomb lobbed from a car also damaged an electrical substation, police said, causing a short break in power in parts of Manila.

The BPI is partly owned by a real estate conglomerate headed by a businessman supporting the Aquino administration.

Aquino appeared untroubled by the incidents and made no reference to them when she spoke Tuesday before diplomats and military officers at a shrine for Filipino soldiers killed in World War II.

But the 58-year-old president stressed the need for unity to protect the democracy she restored after ousting then President Ferdinand Marcos in a 1986 popular revolt.

"We can be truly free only if we are united and willing to commit ourselves to the defence of our democratic way of life," she said.

Police also blamed rebel soldiers for most of the more than 50 bomb explosions that hit Manila in the last months of 1990.

Outgoing armed forces chief Lieutenant-General Rodolfo Biazon blamed Tuesday's attacks on army rebels who have failed to unseat Aquino in six previous coup attempts.

"Those elements who want to destabilise the government saw an opportunity to do it, by riding on yesterday's events," Biazon told reporters, referring to Aquino's popular revolt.

"We will try my best to preserve the unity of the party," Ohuchi said.

1 killed and 30 escape in Bangladesh prison revolt

DHAKA (R) — Bangladesh said Tuesday it had crushed a revolt in Dhaka's maximum security jail in which at least one prisoner was killed, over 100 were wounded and up to 30 managed to escape.

The paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) denied earlier reports by prison officials and local residents that they had used machineguns to put down the revolt Monday night.

"We helped police trying to put down the trouble inside Dhaka jail but we did not use machineguns," a BDR officer said.

Takeshita's right-hand man heads Japan's ruling party

TOKYO (R) — Keizo Obuchi, who became the new head of Japan's ruling party Tuesday, is a right-hand man of former Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita.

Ohuchi, who served in Takeshita's 1987-1989 administration as chief cabinet secretary, has assumed the powerful post of secretary-general of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

He succeeds Ichiro Ozawa, who took responsibility for his party's defeat in the Tokyo governor's election.

"I will try my best to preserve the unity of the party," Ohuchi said in a news conference.

Voters in the capital returned incumbent Governor Shunichi Suzuki, who was supported by local LDP chapter rebels, in an overwhelming triumph Monday.

Ohuchi's statement reflected the party's wish to mend the split that divided its national headquarters from the local Tokyo chapter at the time of the Tokyo governor's poll.

Obuchi was selected according to the rules of factional politics that govern the LDP. Like Ozawa, Ohuchi is a deputy leader of Takeshita's faction.

KARACHI (R) — Pakistani customs officers seized two tonnes of hashish from a container at Karachi Port, a customs spokesman said Monday. The drugs, seized Sunday, were concealed in a false wall of a container packed with bath robes waiting for export to an unnamed port in Europe.

Bikers blockade Australian parliament

CANBERRA (R) — Hundreds of leather-clad motorcyclists, protesting against plans to make them keep headlights on in daylight, blocked roads to Australia's parliament for an hour, jamming traffic and making politicians walk.

The government plans to introduce laws this year to ban motorcycle ignitions linked to the light systems so that lights can never be turned off, making the biker more visible. But bikers' leader Andy Hart told reporters it was not proven that lights permanently on would save lives.

Kelley also quoted starlet Selene Walters as saying that a week before he announced his engagement to Nancy Davis in February, 1992, Reagan forced her to have sex with him.

The former president said in his statement that many of his friends had urged him to issue a point-by-point denial of the book's charges.

But, "to do so would, I feel, provide a legitimacy to a book that has no basis in fact and serves no decent purpose," he said.

COLUMN

Greene buried in Swiss hamlet

VEVEY, Switzerland (AP) — Graham Greene was buried in a Swiss village overlooking Lake Geneva, after a Roman Catholic funeral in which he was eulogised as the "last classic writer of the 20th century." Only about 60 people, mostly family and friends, attended the ceremony at St. John's Church, near the hospital where the English novelist died of a blood disease last Wednesday. He was 86. In a career spanning more than half a century, Greene wrote 24 novels, as well as essays and several successful movie scripts. Some of his most acclaimed novels include *The Power And The Glory* and *The Heart Of The Matter*. "His work remains with us here and his legacy to history," said Father Leopoldo Duran, a Spanish priest and longtime friend of Greene, who officiated. In his homily, Duran said Greene died peacefully, "simply turning aside and falling asleep." He described the writer as a "lover of silence and solitude."

Michael Landon has cancer

MALIBU, California (R) — Television star Michael Landon said he is suffering from cancer of the pancreas and liver but is determined to beat the life-threatening disease. "I want my agent to know that this shoots to hell any chance of doing a health food commercial," the 55-year-old actor told reporters. He said when he first learned of the possibility he had cancer, "I began doing push-ups just to make sure I was just as strong as I was the day before, and I was, so I figured I can beat it." Landon, who endeared himself to television audiences with starring roles in such series as *Bonanza*, *Little House On The Prairie* and *Highway To Heaven*, explained he had taken the unusual step of holding a press conference in the hope that he and his family would not be hounded by the media.

Aborigines find stolen opals in Australian outback

SYDNEY (R) — Crime won't pay for an Australian opal thief thanks to a group of aboriginal women who discovered his haul buried in the desert while attending tribal rituals.

After burying the opals, worth 500,000 Australian dollars (\$385,000), in a sandy grave in the outback five months ago the thief disappeared, content nobody else would find his booty. But nine days ago a group of aboriginal women attending tribal rituals in the desert noticed a shallow grave, scratched the surface and discovered a suitcase containing the stolen gems.

"I really kissed them goodbye," the opals' owner, John Anderson, said by telephone from Mintabie, a small mining town 1,100 kilometres north of Adelaide. A police spokesman in nearby Coober Pedy said the opals were found on March 31, buried beside a dirt track about 25 kilometres outside Mintabie. He said no one has been arrested for the theft, which occurred on Nov. 16, 1990, in Mintabie.

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